

*The everlasting Communion of Saints with their Lord
in the Kingdom of Heaven their Comfort, when
mourning the Loss of their Fellow-Communicants
on Earth.*

A
S E R M O N

Occasioned by the

D E C E A S E
O F

Mrs. MARY KEENE;

Who departed this Life, *March 16, 1767.*

In the 34th YEAR of her AGE.

In which is contained,

Brief MEMOIRS of her singular Piety, for an
Example to others, and especially to her surviving
YOUNG ACQUAINTANCE.

BY BENJAMIN WALLIN.

The Righteous shall be had in everlasting Remembrance.

PSALM cxii. 7.

L O N D O N:

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W. Murgrove



T O

Mr. Henry Keefe,

the surviving Partner of the Deceased.

T O
Mr. Tho: Cox and Rebecca his Wife:

AND TO
The Mourning FAMILY and Church
to which he belonged.

My dear worthy Friends,

THESE condole our loss, which is great; but we have the mercy of a gospel, in which life and immortality are clearly set forth: This affords a rational, solid, and full consolation under the sorrows of death, which attend the departure of that amiable person, whom our heavenly Father hath been pleased to take to himself.

Few are so indecent as to shun the hearing or reading of a sermon on the decease of a relation or friend; but some are offended when any thing particular is said of the person who is gone, however adapted to our warning and

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comfort; and many, alas! turn away from the grave, as if they had an aversion to the thought of that important change and eternal state, into which they are hastening! The following discourse cannot be pleasing to such; nor to any who are unacquainted with the power of godliness: But they who can admire the fruits of the Spirit, and who are waiting for Jesus from heaven, it is hoped, will find nothing disagreeable.

I am sensible that characters for example are not much in fashion, and especially of those who were in a private capacity; nevertheless, if justly drawn, and exhibited on a proper occasion, although not acceptable to those who see themselves reprov'd, they are becoming and useful. Whether the draught I have presented may be deemed such a performance, is left to the reader; however, he is desired to note, that this impression is principally designed as a memorial and relief for you, Beloved, who are *near*ly concerned. And will a sensible person, whose bowels can move, disallow this indulgence to their christian neighbours, when they grieve at parting with so dear and promising a relation, who was cut off before them, in the midst of her days? And if any
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at a distance should peruse it with advantage, they will naturally sympathize with you, and give God the praise.

It would be very unkind to consider our regard to the memory of the decease, as a design to exalt her above others, or to depreciate any who survive her: She needs not the praise of mortal lips; and we trust she now lies among the dead in Christ, who will be honoured by him at his coming. And many remain who live the same life of faith, and whose names, in the end, will be equally precious; but, when a young person is removed soon after her public profession, with the symptoms of ripeness for glory, shall any be offended that we point out the monument of grace? And I hope, my dear friends, that the testimony of your conscience, with respect to the exact literal truth of every fact repeated in the pages ensuing, and the success of this undertaking, will dissipate the fears of seeming to be ostentatious, which, for a season, delayed your request. You know that I have been sparing in my account; and for my own part I am not ashamed, on this solemn occasion, openly to rejoice, and to bless God for this instance of his special mercy; and I heartily wish, that all the churches of Christ

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were filled with the like examples of his power and love; nor am I without hope that this compliance will prove effectual in the hand of the Lord, to animate others, and particularly some of the rising generation, to be found in his ways, and to honour his name.

THAT we may obtain mercy to improve this afflicting stroke, and with diligence to follow them, who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises, is the heart's desire, and earnest prayer of,

Dearly Beloved,

Your affectionate Minister,

and Fellow-Mourner,

*Porters-Buildings, Southwark,
May 1, 1767.*

BENJAMIN WALLIN.



I THESS.

I T H E S S. iv. 17.

— *And so shall we ever be with the
Lord.*

I NEED not relate the mournful occasion of my leading your thoughts to this subject. It contains a pleasing expectation of the faithful, which greatly delighted our deceased young friend in the views of her change, and is no less adapted to conciliate our minds under the loss we sustain; and may the Spirit of grace enable us to apply the consolation it affords!

THERE is comfort of love in the fellowship of the Spirit; yet, in this imperfect state, sorrows attend even the communion of saints. We are liable to be grieved through a variety of changes, in the frame and condition of those with whom we are united, while they are present, but their separation from us, by death,

is still more affecting. To part with a dear fellow-christian, in whose conversion we have rejoiced, and who hath endeared herself to us by the sweetness of her counsel, her good conversation, and her constant attendance with us in the sanctuary, is a trial unknown to the world.

UNDER repeated trials of this kind the *Thessalonians* were mourning; many of their precious companions were removed; it is probable some lost their lives for the testimony of Jesus, while more were carried off in the ordinary course; however, they had sorrow upon sorrow, which almost overwhelmed them: to revive their poor spirits, the Apostle reminds them of their return, and of their meeting again with the Lord at his appearance and kingdom: in verse 14, he observes, that if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him; and then proceeds to the manner in which the saints shall be gathered in that great and notable day of the Lord, and to shew that those christians who are in the state of the dead, will be as certain and early with Jesus as if they were alive at his coming: ver. 15. For this we say unto you, by the word of the Lord,

Lord, i. e. by express revelation; *that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord*; The Apostles did not imagine that they themselves should then be found among the living; a notion which their history and writings confute. It is a manner of speech similar to that used by the Prophet *Hosea*, chap. xii. 4. where, referring to the appearance of God to *Jacob*, he says, *he found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us*; i. e. with us his covenant seed, who were in the loins of our father. Thus, in the instance before us, the Apostle seems to have in view the whole election of grace, which will be gathered at the revelation of Jesus, and to consider himself, and his brethren as part of that body; we, i. e. those of the church whereof we are members, who are alive at his coming, *shall not prevent, anticipate, or go before them that are in the grave.* Death shall not detain those who are under its power, or delay their joining the Lord when he comes in his glory. So then those who wake in this respect, hath no advantage beyond them that sleep, as appears from ver. 16: *for the Lord himself shall descend from heaven; himself, and not another*; as the angels declared at the time of his ascension, *Acts*

i. 11. *This same Jesus which is taken from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.* He shall come in a local, gradual and visible manner; *every eye shall see him*, Rev. i. 7. “He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people;” not by any commission or delegate, but in his own proper person, the majesty and brightness of which no tongue can describe: thus saith the Prophet, *Psalms* l. 6. *God is judge himself. He shall descend with a shout*, a triumphant shout raised by the united voices of the myriads of blessed spirits who will attend the Son of man to the throne of his glory, *Mat.* xxv. 31. This shout will be the voice of a multitude, as the sound of many waters, *Rev.* xix. 6, 7. Again, *With the voice of the archangel*; either an angel of superior rank among the celestial host, employed on this solemn and important occasion, *for they are all ministring spirits*; or rather, as some, Christ himself, who is the head of all principality and power. It is added, *and with the trump of God*, the last trump, *for the trumpet shall sound*, *1 Cor.* xv. 52. as at mount Sinai, but unspeakably louder: That in the wilderness extended to the camp of the *Israelites*, who were indeed very numerous; but

but this shall sound an alarm to summons the multitude of all nations to Christ's awful tribunal: This may be styled the trump of God as it is blown at his powerful word of command, or because it is sounded before the Judge, who is God. But some put this trumpet in the mouth of Jesus himself; and may we not justly consider these sentences together as a figurative description of what our Saviour more plainly declares, *John v. 25. The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.* And again, ver. 28. *All that are in the graves shall hear his voice.* However, we know that when this trumpet sounds, the graves shall be opened; and it is expressly declared, *that the dead in Christ shall rise first.* The scriptures frequently point to this order of the resurrection, namely, of the righteous before the wicked.

Thus, to the above-quoted passage in *John v.* it immediately follows, *and all that are in their grave shall come forth; they that have done good, to the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, to the resurrection of damnation; which answers to the prophecy of Daniel, chap. xii. 2. Them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame*

shame and everlasting contempt. The same idea is conveyed in 1 Cor. xv. 23. *Every man in his own order, Christ the first fruits, afterwards they that are Christs, at his coming.* And in Rev. xix. 6. we read of the first resurrection, the happy subjects of which are secure from the second death, that fearful death, which on account of its torments is compared to a lake of fire, ver. 14.

It seems therefore that they who die in the Lord, will come forth from their graves before the wicked and unbelieving part of mankind. But our text hath no reference to this; the scope of the place is to shew that the dead in Christ (whose departure we mourn) are not left or forsaken when he comes, but shall be raised first; i. e. before the chosen are gathered to him, as appears from the following account: *Then we, which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; which will be done in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,* 1 Cor. xv. 52. So then, the deceased in Christ shall not come behind those that are alive when the Saviour is revealed, but the quick and the dead shall be taken up together to meet him.

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IN this manner shall the ransomed of the Lord be taken from the evil to come, and be safe from the wrath and fearful indignation which the sin-avenging Judge shall pour out on the world of the ungodly, when the earth and the heavens shall be destroyed by fire: But what perfects the account is in our text, *So shall we ever be with the Lord.*

A few words may explain this short, but sweet and pithy sentence of the gospel. Believers are sometimes said to be with their Lord in a mystical sense; to be dead, buried, and risen with him; yea, and in respect of their union with Christ, and the relation which subsists between them, and of his being their forerunner and representative in glory, it is declared, *that they are raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, Eph. ii. 6.*

AND further, the spiritual presence of the Lord is sometimes the joy and delight of his people. Indeed, in this state of trial they frequently mourn the hidings of his face, yet he is often graciously pleased to visit their souls, sometimes in secret, when engaged in their closets, or when calling upon him in their families apart; then are they filled with reverence

rence and joy, and ready, as *Jacob*, with admiration to say, *Surely the Lord is in this place; this is no other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven!* But the loving kindness of *Jesus* is still more displayed in his temple, thus, *S. S. chap. i. 12. While the King sitteth at the table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof.* And again, *chap. ii. 4. He brought me to the banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love.*

Thus the faints are frequently in the presence of the Lord; they are abundantly satisfied with the goodness of his house, and even sometimes find inexpressible pleasure in communion with him whom they love: then they admire his condescension and grace. But these are instances of the Lord with his people, and answer not to the intention of the text, which is strictly and properly to be with Christ where he is; *i. e.* in his immediate presence, in a local and visible manner, according to *John xii. 24.* It is one thing for *Jesus* to be spiritually with us here below in the communications of his love, through faith; and another thing for us to be with him in a state of vision above; but the latter is evidently the subject before us. Neither is it barely to be in his presence, or meerly to see or behold him:

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this indeed will be an unspeakable honour, satisfaction and joy: but, as one * justly observes, "*To be with Christ*, is to be in his immediate presence, and to enjoy the manifestation of it in the fullest and most effectual manner."

In this manner the redeemed, in that day, shall *see his face*, Rev. xxii. 4. They shall behold and enjoy him; under the blissful smiles of his countenance their souls shall be solaced with his glory and love, and, to the utmost, experience that in his presence, there is fulness of joy, and at his right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

To this blessed fruition the christian attains immediately upon his decease: 2 Cor. v. 8.

Absent from the body, and present with the Lord.

And again, saith Jesus to the penitent thief,

To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise. Hence

Paul, when in suspense, declares, *he was in*

a straight betwixt two, having a desire to depart

and to be with Christ, Phil. i. 23. This in it-

self is a comforting thought, and tends to

alleviate our sorrow for them who are fallen

asleep; but it doth not fully reach our case,

when we lament the absence of these dear com-

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panions.

* The late excellent Rev. Dr. Joseph Stennett. See his discourse on the decease of Mrs. Mary Roberts, p. 15.

panions. With respect to them we are satisfied, but it affords not sufficient relief to ourselves; nor will the prospect of joining them soon, in a separate state, though of a healing nature, completely bind up the wound, or make an ample amends for our loss. True, in a while we also shall be dissolved, and our spirits join them in the presence of God and of the Lamb, to share in the joys of the heavenly paradise; yet even this is but a communion in part; and although, so far as it goes, it is more noble than what we attain in the present state, in the most advantageous situation; yet nothing short of being recovered to communion in our complete persons, even in those identical bodies in which we have conversed on earth, can totally remove the complaint which arises from a separation by death—a separation which must continue while they are detained in the grave: the Apostle accordingly refers to our joining in the resurrection, when each saint in his flesh shall see God, and those who are now parted shall again be restored to their fellowship one with the other.

THIS return will abundantly compensate for the absence we mourn, especially when it is considered,

considered, that then all the saints shall be gathered together in one. No doubt the Apostle had a peculiar eye on those individual persons who had been lately removed, when he saith, *that we shall be ever with the Lord*. But this pronoun comprehends the whole number of the elect; for the desire and expectation of the faithful is to join all the redeemed, even each member of the body of Christ, which shall then be made perfect.

AND further, as hinted already, what completes the satisfaction is this, That they shall never more separate, but abide in this union of soul and body, and in their communion, together in the presence of the Lord, to eternity, of which more hereafter. So then what the Apostle saith (with a *perhaps*) to *Philemon* concerning *Onisimus*, ver. 15. we may, with the greatest propriety and *certainly*, apply to our deceased christian friends; *they are departed for a season, that we may receive them for ever*.

THAT we may improve this gospel-affurance, agreeable to the present occasion, two things may be noted, which clearly result from what hath been said.

I. THAT there is just occasion for mourning the decease of our beloved companions in the Lord. And,

II. THAT the certain prospect of a complete fellowship with Christ, and one another, which will commence at the resurrection, according to the gospel, yields a full consolation to the faithful, under the loss of their dear christian friends.

IN handling these points, I shall consider the propriety of sorrow on parting with these lovely companions, lay before you the grounds of the joyful expectation held forth in the text, and then point out several things which attend this re-union of the saints, which together are a sufficient ground of comfort under the loss we sustain by these removes. And,

I. LET us attend to the propriety of mourning under these stripping dispensations of providence. This enquiry is needful, and I hope will be of use, since we are liable to mistake the genuine spirit of real religion, and some affect to be indifferent, as if sorrow under
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these strokes of the Almighty was unbecoming the christian ; but the Apostle doth not absolutely condemn the disciples at *Thessalonica* for grieving, who appear greatly afflicted by repeated instances of mortality among them, only, lest they should be overwhelmed or grieve to excess, he directs them to the hope in the text.

Not to mourn the loss of dear and valuable companions, is rather unnatural than pious ; and even humanity itself will lead to sorrow on these mournful occasions. But it is amazing to see how some, under specious pretences, would cover their singular hardness of heart, and make that pass for an high attainment in religion, which, in reality, falls short of the lowest degree of true piety, yea, and is opposite to it.

ALL are not alike susceptible of sympathy, and there are different symptoms of grief ; one is soon melted into tears, another cannot weep : the constitution and habit of body is various ; but to affect an apathy or unconcernedness under these awful and grievous changes in life, is to attempt a contradiction to nature, reason, and divine revelation ; an attempt which is not to be justified, But
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the propriety of sorrow on account of these trials will appear when we consider,

I. EVERY stroke of this kind is a providential rebuke; and, when repeated in the church, carries in it an intimation of our heavenly Father's displeasure. Thus at *Corinth*, 1st. Epistle, xi. 30. the Apostle, after relating their disorders and schisms, declares, *For this cause*, saith he, *many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep*. They were chastened of the Lord by sickness and death, and these frequent afflictions were occasioned by their disagreeable behaviour in his house, by which they were called to repentance, as expressed in some following verses.

IN like manner, when many are taken away by death in any community, and especially when those are cut off, who are in the prime of their days and promise for usefulness, although hereby the counsel of the Lord is executed, and he has graciously left us the hope in our text for our comfort under such trials, nevertheless they are his paternal rebukes, and his voice is to us as to the *Corinthian*, *judge yourselves*; i. e. search and try your works and state, O my people!

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IN short, by these strokes the Lord calls us to mourning; to refrain from which, is so far from appearing religious, that it rather wears the aspect of presumptuously despising his hand. But again,

2. THE universal history of the faithful justifies our grief when our valuable friends are removed. Not only the *Thebssalomians*, who were sorely afflicted on the like occasion, but those who feared God, have in all ages been an example of this sorrow: Yea so becoming it is to mourn under these dispensations, that the Prophet *Isaiab*, chap. lvii. 1. laments it as a mark of great degeneracy that none laid it to heart: when “the righteous perished, and the “merciful were taken away.”

NOR are tears a sign of weakness in nature or in grace. The most heroic characters in the Old and New Testament shew that eminent believers were often weeping. True, we are under the light of the gospel, but even the life and immortality made manifest by it, however a glorious support, doth not by any means destroy the christian's natural affection, or prevent his being afflicted when the hand of the Lord is upon him. *Paul* had a noble fortitude of mind, and well understood

stood the relief offered in the gospel; yet we find, *Phil.* ii. 27. that he esteems the recovery of *Epaphroditus*, a faithful disciple and minister, as a mercy to himself; *lest*, says he, *I should have sorrow upon sorrow*. This great man therefore, was accustomed to mourn at the decease of his brethren. The same idea of his spirit is also conveyed by his concern for *Timothy's* health, *1st Epistle*, ch. v. 23. And the like is discerned in the Apostle *John's* earnest and remarkable wish for his beloved *Gaius*, *Epistle* iii. 2.

It may be a matter of indifferency with some modern professors, but the primitive christians were not ashamed of testifying their love to one another, and to the church, in lamenting the departure of those who had been honourable among them. Thus devout men buried *Stephen* the martyr, *Acts* viii. 2. And again, chap. ix. 3. we find the saints bitterly weeping over the corps of an amiable sister, whom the Lord was pleased to revive by the ministration of *Peter*: Yea, and we see Jesus himself groaning and shedding tears at the grave of *Lazarus* his friend, whom he also raised from the dead. These resurrections,
indeed,

indeed were extraordinary, but their sorrow on these occasions was the genuine fruit of brotherly love, and a pious concern for the prosperity of *Zion*, and therefore highly became them.

We are prone to exceed, and something carnal may mix with our best frames; nevertheless there is a sober use of the passions which belong to religion, and where a friendship is formed in the fellowship of the gospel, if the love of God is in exercise, a separation will be grievous on our own account, and still more so on account of the public; which leads,

3. To observe, that it becomes us to mourn these rebukes of providence, seeing in every instance the church is deprived of one instrument towards her edification. Indeed the spirit and conduct of some, is such as render them a burthen and grief to society; their pride, worldly-mindedness, and disorderly walk, are a continual exercise to the patience of those with whom they are united. It may give us concern, when we consider the habit in which such are called before God; otherwise a community is relieved by the death of an unprofitable member: But I speak

of one, who, like her we now mourn, is an honour and comfort to his fellow-christians; when such an one is taken away, it is a real loss, in proportion to his ability and zeal; on which account we have reason to sorrow, and especially when we subjoin,

4. THAT the separation is final. *Sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more, Acts xx. 28.* The like occasion for grief there is, when a useful person is removed; his face will no more be seen in the church on earth; the advantage of his earnest prayers, his sweet counsel, and his amiable example are all utterly ceased; nor shall we ever have any further communion with him, of any kind, till we ourselves are likewise dissolved: A consideration which greatly increases our trouble at parting: But thanks be to God, though our loss is final in time, it will be recovered with advantage in eternity; we shall meet again at the revelation of Jesus, *and be ever with the Lord.* I proceed therefore, Secondly, to lay before you the grounds of this hope. And,

1. IT stands supported by the decree of the Father, *Mat. xxv. 34. Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from*

from the foundation of the world. Now the kingdom into which the elect are gathered, is everlasting, 2 Pet. i. 11. The promise is of an eternal inheritance, Heb. ix. 15. The children are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; and being once brought into possession with him, they shall be no more separated for ever. It is written, 1 Thess. v. 9. *that God hath appointed us to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ*; and the following verse demonstrates, that this salvation includes the saints continuance with him, which leads,

2. To observe, that this was the view with which our Saviour laid down his life; it was the end of his sufferings and death: this the Apostle declares, 1 Thess. v. 10. *Who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.* So then, whether among those who shall remain alive, or of them who shall be raised from the dead at the coming of Christ, in order to meet him, every member of his mystical body, which he hath espoused to himself, shall be united and live together for ever with him. This was the joy set before Jesus, when he *endured the cross and despised the shame*; he loved the church and gave himself for it, *that having redeemed it with his*
C 2 *blood,*

blood, he might sanctify and cleanse it, and present it to himself a glorious church, Eph. v. 27. then shall *New Jerusalem* come down from God out of heaven, as a bride adorned for her husband. *This is the King's daughter, who is all glorious within, and whose cloathing is of wrought gold, Psalm xlv. 13.* who shall shine in the beauty of her righteousness, which she derives from her Lord; "then shall every faint be presented faultless before the presence of his glory with joy." But is this presentation for a transient view of her beauty? certainly no; the allusion would not be just, if the Lord and his people were ever to separate again. When the nuptials are finished, the married pair continue together till death doth them part; but there is no death after the resurrection, therefore Christ and his church will then be eternally united.

THIS marriage-supper of the Lamb would fall short of the figure by which it stands represented, if Jesus could be satisfied with any thing less than the everlasting enjoyment of his people; but he gave himself for them, and redeemed them with his blood, that they might dwell with him in the eternal mansions of his heavenly kingdom, which will be still more confirmed when we consider,

3. THAT

3. THAT this is the subject of our Lord's intercession; which being grounded on a complete atonement for sin, will surely prevail: Thus he pleads with authority, *Jahn xvii. 24. Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory.* What; for a season? No; as long as *Immanuel* shines in his glory, which will be doubtless for ever, he requires his saints to behold it. This he requests, and this he demands, that his people should ever be with him, and always behold him in that state of glory unto which he was advanced, on having finished his work on the cross, and in which he will appear at his coming. This is agreeable to covenant-engagements; nor is there any thing lies in the way to prevent it. It was stipulated, that the *Messiah* should see his seed, even *the travail of his soul, and be satisfied*, Isa. liii. 10, 11. compared. And it is evident that he will be satisfied with nothing less than this, that those whom the Father hath given him, and whom he hath redeemed unto God, be with him where he is, or dwell with him for ever in glory; and seeing he hath ratified the New-Testament in his blood, by the shedding of which he satisfied justice, he is intitled to his plea,

plea, and it becomes the all-perfect Jehovah to admit his saints to his presence for ever. And further,

4. THIS may be argued from the desire and hope of the christian. To be together with Christ in the future world, and to enjoy him for ever in the kingdom of God, is the earnest expectation and hope of all true believers: nor is this the effect of a fond imagination—it is wrought in them by the Holy Ghost—it agrees with the promise—and it results from their union with Christ, and their supreme affection for him, insomuch that if in the end they were not to *be for ever with the Lord*, they would be for ever unhappy. This manner of reasoning, as some have observed, the Apostle uses, 2 Cor. v. 1, 2. He grounds the certain knowledge which christians have of their *building of God, or house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*, when this earthly tabernacle is dissolved, on their panting after the same; *for, saith he, in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be cloathed upon with our house, which is from heaven*. Indeed there he refers to the celestial habitations of separate spirits; but in these the just *wait for the adoption*, to wit, *the redemption of the body*; and we may safely infer

fer from the longing expectation and hope of believers of this eternal communion with Christ and one another, that they shall certainly attain it. It is true, the regenerate themselves are not absolutely secure from desires of the flesh, and hopes that are vain; but a hope which is the fruit of the Spirit, and grounded in the testimony of God, shall not make ashamed; for the scripture cannot be broken, nor the holy Spirit of truth work in the mind a false expectation: but the hope whereof we are speaking, like the faith from whence it ariseth, is of divine operation; and consequently a sure earnest for obtaining its object, seeing the work of the Lord is perfect, *and faithful is he that hath promised*; "he that hath wrought them for the self-same thing, and hath given them the earnest of his Spirit, will not disappoint them," 1 Cor. v. 5. But again,

5. The *fitness* of the saints, when raised from the dead, for continuing in the presence of their glorified Saviour, is another ground of this hope. In this mortal frame the believer is incapable of the vision of Jesus; he views him by faith, but a sight of his glory he could not sustain; but when he attains unto
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the resurrection of the dead he shall *see him as he is*; he shall then “behold his face in righteousness, when he awakes in his likeness.” The departed spirits of the just are already made perfect, nor shall they be moved from their mansions of bliss, till the gathering referred to in the text, then shall their bodies also be completely adapted for an eternal abode with their illustrious Redeemer, being spiritual and glorious as his.

THIS consideration, connected with what has already been observed, confirms the christian in his hope; for what should prevent the chosen of the Father, who are redeemed by the blood of his Son, with a view to their dwelling together, agreeable to the intercession of Jesus, and the hope of his people? I say, what should interrupt these happy objects of divine love in their fellowship with the Lord, or deprive them of it when once it hath commenced in a state of perfection? Nothing but sin, and mortality shall separate Christ and his church; these being totally and finally removed, and his saints admitted into his presence, shall certainly continue together for ever. To these many express assurances might be joined, and particularly that in *Rev.*

iii. 12. they are the words of the exalted Jesus, ushered in with a remarkable solemnity; these things, saith he that is holy, he that is true, *Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of God, and he shall go NO MORE out.* But time would fail to rehearse the whole testimony of scripture; I therefore forbear: but there is one thing which must not be entirely omitted, for,

6. THE honour of the Redeemer requires, that his people should abide eternally with him. If by any means the elect could be separated from the fruition of Christ in glory, his power, merit and love would be impeached, and it would not be true that he *obtained eternal redemption*, Heb. ix. 12. But, blessed be God, we have ample proof of the infinite and unchangeable perfection and grace of our glorious High-Priest; besides, two things the scripture makes needful to complete the honour of Jesus in his kingdom, namely, that his redeemed should behold his glory, as hinted before. And then again, *that he should be glorified and admired in them*, 2 Theff. i. 10. i. e. as I conceive, by the holy angels, for though every eye shall see him, there is no reason to apprehend that the wicked will ever admire our Saviour,

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whose image will then shine forth in his saints : Now both these require that they should be with him. The ultimate view of Christ in his obedience to death, was to do the will of the Father ; for this purpose, though in the form of God, *he took upon him the form of a servant*, and declares, that he *sought not his own will, but the will of his Father*. And again, *I honour my Father*, John v. 3. compared with chap. viii. 49. Nevertheless it became him to regard his own honour likewise, as he certainly did : this is plainly implied in the demand already repeated ; and for this also he expressly applies, as the reward of his death, saying, *I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do ; and now, Father, glorify thou me*, John xvii. 4, 5. In the view of this glory he so ardently hastened to accomplish his death, saying, *Luke xii. 50. I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished !* Hence also he made that triumphant declaration, when he bowed on the cross, *It is finished*, John xix. 30. And indeed the glory of the Father stands connected with the honour due to his Son, who hath compleated his will ; and seeing that all the prophets bare witness to *the glory which should follow the suffer-*
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ings of Christ, 1 Pet. i. 11. it is evident that this was stipulated for in the covenant of redemption, for, what is prophecy but a revelation of the counsel of God? Thus the honour of the Father is concerned in the glory of his Son, and that requires that his people should be with him for ever. We may therefore be fully assured, that when the saints are gathered to the Lord at his coming, they shall never more part. It remains,

Thirdly, THAT I point out some things concerning the fellowship of Christ in the day of his appearance, which may reconcile and comfort our hearts under these mournful separations; and these are in a measure to be collected from what has been said: As,

I. THE *certainty* of attaining this hope, is one source of courage and joy. Was there any just reason to question the truth of this report, or to conclude it precarious, our hearts might then be liable to fail: But we have already seen on what grounds it proceeds; and after the abundant proof that has been given out of the scriptures, it is sufficient to say, that the christian, in pursuit of this glory, "runs not as uncertainly, neither doth he "fight as one that beateth in the air," 1 Cor.

ix. 26. As sure as the counsel of God shall stand, and Christ shall obtain the end of his victory on the cross, as sure as the Redeemer's righteous intercession will prevail with the Father, and the Father will answer his covenant-engagements, and fulfil the expectation and demand of his Son, in granting him the just reward of his sufferings and death, so certain it is that the Lord's people shall dwell together for ever with him. And further,

2. It will be *soon*; which is no small addition to this blessed hope. The period in which we shall join in fellowship again, is not only *certain*, but *near*; it is but awhile, we are parted by death; but a very small season we survive those we mourn, and then we shall meet these precious companions among the spirits of the just in the temple above. This single consideration may, in a measure, compose and comfort our hearts; but the prospect yielded in the text is nothing short of that day, when, being revived from the dead, we shall be taken up together in the retinue of our Saviour, whom we look for from heaven. In our present narrow views and short calculations, unless faith is assisting, we may think it long, but in
reality

reality the time is hastening upon us, and the trumpet, in a manner, is ready to sound, 1 *Pet.* iii. 8, 9. *One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day; the Lord is not slack concerning his promise, for behold he cometh, saith Enoch, the seventh from Adam, with ten thousand of his saints, Jude 14.* The coming of the Lord is considered as nigh in that ancient prophecy, to which agrees *James v. 8.* and since which many thousands of years are run out; the world is waxing old as a garment, and its dissolution approaches: Indeed the day of the Lord shall so come as a thief in the night: and we know that the ungodly will at last be overtaken as in the flood, 2 *Pet.* iii. 10. compared with *Mat. xxiv. 37.* and it is vain to presume, or even conjecture the exact time, which no man knoweth, no not the angels in heaven; but of this we are certain, *Jesus* saith, *Behold I come quickly!* *Rev. xxii. 20.* It is at least near seventeen hundred years since that declaration from heaven was made; and shall we not watch and be ready? The Judge may not come in this generation, but certainly he is at the door, and consequently the period draws near when his saints shall be gathered. Now the sorrow
which

which results from parting with our dear companions, must be assuaged, in proportion to the nearness of that re-union in fellowship with Christ, which is presented for our relief; and therefore the consideration of being *soon* again joined in communion with him, affords a noble and strong consolation under these trials. Besides,

3. IT enhances the pleasure of this expectation, that our communion will then, in several respects, infinitely exceed that which we at present enjoy : As,

1. WITH respect to the Lord himself, it will be direct, and in a way of sight; we now walk by faith, and are at a distance; Christ and the things which are above, are beheld as it were *through a glass*, and but darkly; but then, as hath been proved, we shall be in his immediate presence—we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known—we shall then be embraced in the arms of our Beloved, or rather shall be in his bosom, and obtain the most intimate enjoyment of him, in the regions of light. Again,

2. THE fellowship of the saints will then be constant and perfect. Here our actual communion, in the presence of the Lord, is not only distant

distant and dark, which we often, and justly lament: but this worship, such as it is, is soon interrupted; we come together for a season, and presently the assembly is dismissed, and we separate again; it is but for an hour; and if at any time our hearts are enlarged, and the opportunity is sweet, alas, how soon is it over! and it may be the favor of it too! but there; in the heavenly city, and especially in the ultimate state of the kingdom of God, we are told, *the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day; for there shall be no night there*, Rev. xxi. 25. In that state the saints will always continue together in the presence of God and the Lamb. Here also weakness and defects, more or less, attend each communicant, which greatly interrupt their joy; but in the world to come, every worshipper will be complete in his person and service; hence the part which he bears in that blessed society will increase the happiness and pleasure of his companion in glory. And further,

3. THE communion of saints will then be *universal*, and in that respect exceed our present attainment. Here, in the most advantageous situation, - alas, how small the number with whom we associate! One church may be larger than another, but the most popular society

society contains but a few in comparison; yea, we can see but a few of the disciples of Jesus, who are co-temperary with us; so short do we come of the catholic church. Thus the limits of communion now are too narrow for the soul when enlarged in desires after a complete fruition of Christ; but hereafter, when the chosen are united at his coming, their fellowship will extend to the utmost of their wish; they shall then be abundantly satisfied in fellowship with the whole mystical body of the Saviour; not a single vessel of mercy shall be wanting, but the host of the redeemed, out of every kindred, tongue and nation, which no man can number, shall make up the general assembly. And,

4. To finish the report, this hope is crowned with eternity. After all, was there any danger of losing this blessedness, our joy would cease; but thanks be to God, this is not to be feared, this fellowship endureth for ever: universal nature shall be dissolved, but the pillars of the temple in heaven are not to be shaken, nor shall any thing be able to separate the people of God from that state of communion, into which they shall enter in the kingdom of the Father.

THE sum of our discourse is as follows: Neither sorrow or tears are unseemly in the christian; when his companions in the Lord are taken away; it answers to the call of providence and the example of the most eminent believers under both dispensations. By every stroke of this kind, we are deprived of an instrument for our edification, and the loss is not to be recovered, so that there is just cause for mourning the decease of our dear christian friends; but this noble consolation the gospel affords; namely, a certain prospect of joining them again, not merely in the state of separate spirits, but chiefly at the resurrection of the dead, when Christ shall gather his elect to be with him for ever. A blessed hope which the text, and parallel scriptures clearly set forth, and which stands confirmed by a variety of articles which are grounded on the testimony of God; particularly the Father's appointment, and the end of the sufferings and death of his Son. The express intercession of the Redeemer is also another security; and it may further be argued from the christian's desire and hope, *which maketh not ashamed*; moreover the saints meetness in themselves, when made perfect for an eter-

nal abode together with their Lord; and, in one word, the concern which the Mediator's honour hath in the continuance of his people in his glorious presence, insure the faithful this fair and eternal inheritance; and finally, it appears, that the certainty and nearness of this happy period, together with the transcendent manner of our fellowship with Christ, which will then take place, may well comfort our hearts, and reconcile us to a separation for a season.

FROM these things, Beloved, it is easy to discern the common centre of believers. We are told, that the disciples from the beginning were of one heart and of one soul, and truly this is the case with all real christians in every age; they may differ in points that are doubtful, or not essential to the obedience of faith, yea and in their manner of worship they also may differ, according to their various conceptions of the mind of God in his word; but however they differ in other respects, in this they unite, without any exception, namely, in their love to Jesus, and in an unfeigned and ardent desire after the enjoyment of him as their ultimate happiness. Christ is their all; they all claim him as their Beloved; and he is all

all their gain in time and in eternity. Their mutual love to each other is stronger than death, yet subordinate to that which they bear to the Lord, the supreme object of their affection, insomuch that the pleasures of their communion together, depend on their union to him, and rise in proportion to the manifestation of his glory and love. In one word, their utmost wish is to dwell together with him. This agrees with the Prophet, *Psalms lxxiii. 25.* (for true piety is for substance the same in all generations) *Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.* Again,

How exalted, my friends, is true christian-fellowship! Charity is the bond. Behold how the disciples of Jesus love one another; while united in this world, they mutually rejoice in each others present and future happiness; and on parting, though but for a while, their hearts are filled with sorrow; nor can any thing comfort the survivor under his loss, short of meeting his companion again, and with him to remain for ever with the Lord. Herein is brotherly love and cordial affection! O that the symptoms of the like fervent charity abounded in every place! May we not justly

bewail when any thing appears to the contrary among those who name Jesus Christ? Selfish and sordid souls, who are unprincipled in the love of God, may be clothed with a form, but they are absolutely incapable of true godliness or the communion of the saints.

And, are there so many reasons for sorrowing the loss of our deceased christian friends? and are Prophets, Apostles, yea, and Jesus himself, examples of weeping? Then are they not strange sort of christians who can be unconcerned at repeated strokes of this kind? We see that it is not owing to the love of God, and the power of religion, when they fall short of the sympathy and respect to be discerned in the primitive disciples. A due exercise of brotherly love, would engage us to follow one another to the grave with sore lamentation. I am persuaded better things of you; but if any one *cannot* feel for the daughter of *Zion*, when in tears for her children, I would ask him, or rather beseech him to ask his own soul, Where are the bowels and mercies which belong to the fellowship of the Spirit?

But what is more especially peculiar to the subject which hath employed our attention, is
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the idea it conveys, of a certain knowledge which christians, who are now parted by death, shall have of one another at the resurrection. That God is able to possess his saints with this personal knowledge in a future state, no one can soberly question; nor can it be denied, that something like this hath already been manifest; *James, Peter and John* knew *Moses and Elias* on the mount, whom they had never seen in the flesh, *Mal. xvii. 4.* The rich man, in *Luke xvi.* is supposed to know *Abraham and Lazarus* in the unseen world; yea and from *Job's* confidence, chap. *xix. 26.* it may be justly inferred, that in that day every saint will know his own body, though transformed from a natural and vile to a spiritual and glorious one: The certain expectation of the Apostles, to which every faithful minister of Christ is entitled, *1 Thess. ii. 19, 20.* proceeds on this principle. I hope there have been seals of my ministry among you; but can that choice person now taken from me, or those gone before, for many like breaches have been made, (thanks be to God for you that remain!) but can you, with them, be my visible crown or sensible joy in the day of the Lord, if christians

stians know not each other at his coming? If it is certain that the Prophets, when they appeared in glory with Jesus at his transfiguration, were distinguished by those who had never known them on earth; if it is certain that separate spirits discern those in the unseen state, who departed this life ages before they existed; if it is certain that each saint, when revived, shall know his own flesh, which shall then be wonderfully changed; and if it is certain that gospel-ministers shall glory and joy in particular persons at the appearance of Christ, can it with reason be doubted, that the faithful, and especially that those who have had intimate fellowship here, will know one another when they meet him? I must own, exclusive of this idea, it appears not to me how the consideration of being joined again with the Lord for ever, asserted in the text, can be a direct and full consolation to them who mourn over particular saints who are parted from them by death. True, indeed, every natural tie and relation is dissolved by this change, neither shall we know one another any more after the flesh, according to its present state of existence, there will certainly then be no place for corporal, or carnal

nal affection or knowledge: But doth this hinder the elect from knowing one another in a manner suited to the spirituality and glory of that state in which they will be found at the resurrection of the just? I therefore conclude, that christians will then have a perfect knowledge both of the Lord and each other; and this seems evidently implied in the text itself. In this prospect also, many of the children of God have been delighted, and it hath been one consideration to reconcile them when parting, of which our late dear sister was a remarkable instance; she was greatly entertained, through her long and last illness, with this joyful persuasion, that her beloved companions, whom she esteemed in the Lord, and whom she was shortly to leave, would soon again meet her with Christ, when they should never more part; of whom you will allow me to mention some things, and conclude.

I am sensible it is no easy matter to speak on so delicate a point, but I seek not applause for myself, or for the deceased, and hope that a simple narration of facts will not offend. From her memoirs and letters, and still more from my own observation,

tion, through an intimacy with her from her childhood, I am furnished with materials for a full and particular account of her spirit and conduct, which I apprehend would not be disagreeable to some, and might, if properly received, prove useful to many; but a few things must suffice. Her moral behaviour, in every relation of life, was noticed when we deposited her mortal remains in the tomb; I shall therefore only touch on some particulars [which concern her christian character, with suitable hints by the way, not for her sake, but for yours, or, rather for the glory of God, by whose grace she was what she was.

Too many who descend from those who fear God, carried away by the impetuosity of youthful lusts into the pleasures of life, take a different turn; they forsake the assemblies in which they were trained, and in a neglect, or contempt of the salvation they have heard, are in all appearance perishing in their sins: O that they were sensible of their folly and danger! Thanks be to God, our late friend was prevented this shameful defection, which she always accounted her mercy. She was concerned about the welfare of her soul, at

an age when most seem strangers to abiding thoughts of eternity; a conviction of her depraved and guilty state through the fall, without which no man can repent or believe, soon became deeply rooted in her; nor did I ever meet with any young person whose ideas of the gospel were more clear and distinct. These impressions did not rest in her understanding; her heart was affected with the importance of an interest in Christ, who was glorious in her eyes; and this she earnestly sought by many prayers and tears, and obtained some hope of long before it was known to her nearest acquaintance. In this state of mind she wished to be found in the ways of Christ; but her natural shyness, the views she had of her indwelling corruption, her fear of deceiving herself with common impressions from a pious education, and of resting short of vital religion, long detained her from an open confession of the Lord as her God.

At length, about eighteen months ago, (ah, transitory course!) being set at liberty, she resolved, in the strength of the Lord, to bear witness to his name in the midst of his people: This was followed with a peculiar and sweet discovery of his loving-kindness to her

her soul, which filled her with joy: constrained beyond her natural disposition, she immediately transmitted to me an account of this seasonable visit; in which, after beseeching grace to be humble and vigilant, lest pride and vain glory should give the enemy an advantage, she declares her confidence in the Lord as her righteousness and strength, and says: “O Sir, as my natural eyes have seen the sun shine out this morning on the earth, so I trust has the Sun of righteousness shone in my heart! O may an abiding sense of his love constrain me always, not only now but as long as I live, to praise and glorify him.” She adds, “This, dear Sir, has given me more joy than an increase of this world’s good; for this, I hope and trust, is peace in believing, which the world cannot give nor take away.” I hope no one will think this liberty indecent. Such instances of mercy and gratitude should not be altogether concealed. Many present saw with what alacrity and courage she soon after descended into an element of which she was remarkably timorous, when she was buried with her Lord in baptism. May you*, my dear young friends,

* Two young women present, who were baptized and joined to the church with the deceased.

friends, who joined her on that day of solemn devotion to Christ, long live to follow her lovely example, that being animated thereby to persevere, with a becoming zeal, you also may finish your course with joy, and join her again in the temple above!

Our departed sister (O that it were universally the case!) set about adorning her profession, and to prove her calling and election of God: her public profession did not prevent her from private devotion; she was much in secret with the Lord, and there much enlarged, as appears from her own handwriting. By those sweet intercourses with God in her retirement, she maintained a relish for social piety; in the ordinances of the sanctuary, and especially in the united prayers of God's people she greatly delighted; this she discovered in her early and constant attendance when in health, and in her mournful remarks when prevented; on a certain occasion she complains in these words: "I have been confined two Lord's days by illness, this has been a long and sore trial." This zeal for the house of the Lord, is no more than natural to the believer in the exercise of grace; but if it prevailed in general among nominal

F 2 christians,

christians, surely our assemblies would be more decent, and perfect than they oftentimes are!

It may be useful to note the *charity* of this young professor. In her readiness to every good work, and diligence to assist them that need, and especially those of the household of faith, I may soberly assert, the spirit of *Dorcas* was revived, over whom, when deceased, the primitive christians made sore lamentation, as referred to before. Some who profess the power of the gospel, though possessed of a large share of this world's goods, shew little or no compassion for the poor, but are rather hardened against them; a disposition and conduct, which is truly astonishing and grievous! By the testimony of God, they only who lay themselves out to do good according to their ability, yield a sufficient proof of that *faith which works by love*, without which, a report of religion, we are expressly told, *is as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal*; not so her, whose departure we mourn, a tender concern for the distressed ran through her life; and when dying, she manifested the same by repeated and earnest commendations of the poor to those who survived her.

How fine a prospect to a christian society, from one so disposed and furnished
by

by grace! But, alas, for us! she was not long for this world, as hinted already; this beautiful and promising flower no sooner raised our expectation and hope, but it was the pleasure of the Lord to remove her! A threatening illness advanced gradually upon her, till it appeared to be the first-born of death: In vain were all means tried to preserve so valuable a life! During the pains of this lingering and mortal disease, many can witness that she was truly a pattern of patience, resignation and hope, even to the admiration of those who were about her.

I forbear several striking particulars which attended her tedious and sore conflicts with the last enemy, but one thing I cannot allow myself to pass over in silence; I mean her fortitude, through grace, in this hour of trial, discovered in her frequent most respectful and encouraging remonstrances to her nearest relations and friends, when she perceived them mourning for her; and particularly in a letter left when she went out of town with the sentence of death in herself; a part of which I take leave to insert. In this singular letter, which is addressed to her dear honoured parents and partner; among other pertinent hints, she says, "If it is the Lord's
" will

“ will to remove me by this illness, he will
 “ make up the loss of so poor a creature; he
 “ abides faithful; he has hitherto supported
 “ you under every trial, and has promised
 “ never to leave you.” And further, to her
 honoured parents, she adds, which is very
 remarkable: “ The Lord has been the God
 “ of your youth, and he will not leave you
 “ in time of age; we shall meet in the upper
 “ world never to part: though I § should be
 “ taken a little before you, let not your sor-
 “ rows run too high for me; but may you
 “ be enabled to look forward towards the
 “ promise of God in Christ Jesus: I hope
 “ and trust I am fixed in him for life and sal-
 “ vation.” And again she proceeds: “ Trust
 “ in him—rely on him—he will sustain you—
 “ his loving-kindness is better than that of sons
 “ and daughters.” On this affecting address,
 permit me but to say, what mournful christian
 parent can wish for more seasonable and con-
 solatory advice from an only dying child?

It has been noted, that the prevailing
 passion of man is usually to be discerned in his
 latest moments; and if this appeared in our
 friend when her departure was at hand, her
 governing passion was no other than that

true

§ This letter was left when going to *Bath*, some months
 before her decease.

true and noble criterion of real christianity, *love to all saints*: In token of this, not long before her decease, when, in appearance under the prospect of glory, she, in a kind of extacy and triumph, clasping her arms round herself, with ardency, cried, "O that I
" could take all that love God along with
" me to heaven †!"

HER end drew nigh, and her pains became strong, but they were mercifully soon, in a measure, abated; after which she lay for the most part composed, now and then repeating her confidence in the Lord, and the hope of meeting with her dear friends hereafter, accompanied with pious exhortations, and even sometimes with singing; ‡ so lively was her faith. At length her flesh and heart failed, and she being fallen into a sweet sleep, while her

† It cannot with reason be supposed, that the deceased hoped for attaining to this, but it is not unusual for a soul on the stretch to wish beyond its own expectation; Thus *Moses, Numb. xi. 29. Would God that all the Lord's people were Prophets!* &c. This earnest wish of our friend, on the borders of eternity, discovered a full satisfaction in her own future state, and her great affection for them that feared God. And further, it evidently corresponds with her animating prospect of a perfect and eternal communion with all saints in glory.

‡ Once in particular, not long before her decease, when nature seemed almost exhausted, so chearful was her frame, that, to the surprise of her friends, she employed several hours

her friends, having no hope of her return, and nothing to plead in her behalf, but an easy and joyful passage, her soul departed, without any sensible convulsion of nature, inso-much that it escaped the notice of those who were attentive at the side of her bed. Thus, we well hope, went to glory the soul of our gracious young friend, whose loss we justly lament, but with resignation to the divine will, and with thanks for the mercy she obtained.

AND now, my dear Reader, hast thou this hope for thyself? It is a question of the highest concern. *To be ever with the Lord* is not the universal lot of mankind, it belongs to them only who die in faith: the unbeliever and impenitent sinner will have no part in this matter; on the contrary, the man who obeyeth not the gospel will be driven from the judgment-seat with a curse upon his head; then will he wail in despair, when he shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. It is peculiar and joyful to die in
a well-

hours in singing repeatedly very pertinent psalms and hymns with joy; and some days afterwards expressed her desire for renewing that delightful exercise, but found it impossible.

a well-grounded hope of eternal life; this they attain who believe in Jesus and live to his glory.

It remains, Beloved, that we follow our dear sister as she followed Christ, in whose bosom she rests: May her example teach us to look forward under every trial, and attend to the Apostle's direction! Let us, like this precious disciple, each one encourage his own soul; and let us also comfort one another. Her separate spirit, now in the presence of God and of the Lamb, waits the reception of ours, whose approaching change shall shortly release us, that we may likewise be admitted into a mansion preparing for us by Jesus the fore-runner of his people. If we are risen with Christ, we shall soon, very soon join our departed friends, who are worshipping at the throne in the heavens: yea, and as for these bodies, it is but a short season that death shall detain them. *Behold he comes quickly*, at whose powerful voice the graves shall open, his dead shall *first* rise; and being gathered to meet him, shall never separate again: *So shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*

To conclude, Brethren: May these mournful dispensations, whereby one and another are

50 *On the Death of, &c.*

parted from us, excite every one's sympathy, and an universal endeavour to support one another! and particularly may it engage us to cleave fast together! Are we in continual danger of parting communion in this present state, and do we hope to be companions *for ever with the Lord* in his kingdom, and shall we not delight to associate ourselves on every occasion? Are we tempted to forsake the meetings of the people with whom we are united in the fellowship of the gospel, in any particular appointment? let us consider, it may be the last opportunity; however, it will soon be the case, as in respect of the dear friend we mourn; we shall no more see or converse with each other in the flesh; death will separate us; therefore while we live let us love one another, and be constant in our assemblies, as a means of our mutual edification, that, being fruitful in every good word and work, in the end, an entrance may be administered to us abundantly, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and dominion, for ever and ever. Amen.



F I N I S.

